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PO 101 Exam 1 Essay

How Should Christians Honor God in Politics?

In a world where political debates often look more like battlefields than conversations, the question of how Christians should engage in politics takes center stage. Should faith dictate every political stance, or is there a way to engage the political landscape while maintaining a God-honoring approach? Dr. Amy Black's book, *Honoring God in Red or Blue*, provides a framework for engaging in politics with humility, grace, and reason. While I agree with her overarching themes, there are areas where my views diverge, particularly on the role of faith-driven action in influencing policies. If more Christians truly sought to honor God in politics, we'd see a radical shift—not necessarily in party dominance, but in the tone and integrity of political engagement.

How Should Christians Honor God in Politics?

Christians should honor God in politics by treating others with respect, pursuing justice, and making faith-driven decisions that align with biblical principles. This means not only engaging in civil discourse but also advocating for policies that reflect God's concern for righteousness, justice, and the well-being of others (Micah 6:8). Respecting authority (Romans 13:1-7) while holding leaders accountable is also part of a God-honoring political engagement.

A major aspect of honoring God in politics is maintaining integrity in discourse. Black emphasizes humility and civility as fundamental Christian approaches to political discussions (Black, 2012, p. 133). I agree, but I also believe that there is a time for boldness. Jesus spoke truth with both grace and firmness, and Christians must find a balance between peaceful dialogue and standing firm on moral principles.

Comparison with Dr. Black's Views

Dr. Black emphasizes civility, thoughtful dialogue, and the idea that Christians can disagree on political matters while still honoring God. She warns against idolizing politics, reminding us that no political party holds a monopoly on biblical truth (Black, 2012, p. 185). While I agree with her push for respectful discourse, I would argue that she underestimates the necessity for boldness in certain areas. There are moments when Christians must take an uncompromising stand—on issues of justice, life, and moral governance.

If more Christians actively sought to honor God in politics, we would likely see an increase in political civility, but more importantly, we'd see policies shaped by moral clarity. Take, for example, William Wilberforce, whose faith compelled him to fight for the abolition of slavery. If Christians today applied similar conviction, issues like poverty, abortion, and corruption could be addressed with a level of urgency that transcends party loyalty.

What Would Happen if More Christians Genuinely Sought to Honor God in Politics?

If Christians truly sought to honor God in politics, the level of civility and respect in political discourse would increase. More importantly, governance would likely shift toward policies rooted in justice, compassion, and biblical morality. Historically, Christian leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. used faith as a driving force for social justice, proving that faith-driven political engagement can lead to profound societal change.

The impact would be visible not just in the political climate but also in how society approaches key moral issues. For example, policies on poverty and criminal justice reform might become more centered on restoration rather than mere punishment, aligning with biblical principles of mercy and justice (Isaiah 1:17). Additionally, faith-driven engagement would shape how leaders approach executive policies, including those seen during the Trump administration. Black's book encourages political humility, but its principles suggest that had more Christians prioritized faith over party allegiance, the divisive rhetoric and policies under Trump's leadership may have been tempered by a stronger commitment to justice, truth, and service to the common good.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Dr. Black's Book

One undeniable strength of *Honoring God in Red or Blue* is its call to humility. Black reminds us that political engagement is not about winning arguments but about pursuing justice and the common good. This aligns with Romans 13:1-7, which calls Christians to respect governing authorities while also holding them accountable.

However, one weakness of her book is its cautious approach to activism. While she encourages participation, she hesitates to endorse strong, faith-driven action on key moral issues. This restraint may be an attempt to avoid political partisanship, but it risks discouraging Christians from fully using

their influence to advocate for justice. Political engagement should be more than just voting or discussing—it should involve action rooted in biblical convictions.

The Personal Impact of the Book

Reading *Honoring God in Red or Blue* challenged me to reassess how I engage with political discussions. It reinforced the importance of treating opponents with respect, even when disagreements are sharp. However, it also highlighted the need for balance—Christians should be both peacemakers and truth-tellers. The book made me more interested in how faith intersects with policymaking and how biblical principles can shape national discussions.

One of the most striking takeaways was Black's discussion of idolatry in politics. It's easy to see politicians as saviors or to believe that one party has all the answers. But politics, like everything else, should be a tool for honoring God—not a replacement for Him. Moving forward, I aim to engage more deeply in policy discussions while ensuring that my political identity never overshadows my faith identity.

Conclusion

Christians honoring God in politics means more than just civility—it requires conviction, wisdom, and action. Dr. Black's book lays an excellent foundation for respectful political discourse, but a truly God-honoring approach demands more than just dialogue; it calls for action rooted in biblical truth. If Christians engage with both humility and boldness, the impact on political civility and governance could be profound. Rather than being known for division, Christians could become leaders in restoring integrity and justice in the political sphere.

Student Learning Goals Alignment

This essay aligns with the following student learning goals:

- **Critical Thinking & Communication:** It evaluates how Christians should approach politics and contrasts different perspectives.
- **Ethics & Morals:** It engages in a civil discussion on the ethical responsibilities of Christians in governance.

- **Global Awareness:** It applies biblical principles to analyze both national and global political issues.

References

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